

Making a change for good

In the Eastern Mount Lofty Ranges, water flow across the landscape is impeded by the number of dams that are collecting surface water runoff. In an effort to improve catchment health, the South Australian Murray-Darling Basin Natural Resources Management Board (SAMDB NRM Board) is encouraging landholders to consider whether they require all of the dams located on their properties. The SAMDB NRM Board is offering financial incentives to assist landholders to remove unrequired dams.

In June 2018, a landholder in Bugle Ranges took advantage of this financial assistance to remove a small disused stock dam. The landholder was keen to allow more water to flow to their main dam downstream and move water through the property to the catchment below, including into some pools. The dam was removed by excavating the dam wall and using the recovered soil to fill the dam depression. This returned surface water flow to its normal pattern and enabled the watercourse to flow naturally again. Geofabric and small rocks were placed along the watercourse to prevent erosion. Over time the deconstructed dam site will revert back to grassy pasture.

In 2019 two more landholders in Wistow and Mount Barker removed small stock dams to free up land for pasture.

The SAMDB NRM Board are seeking to engage with property owners who may have dam capacity in excess of what they require on their properties. This is relatively common in the Mount Lofty Ranges where some large farms that had dams to store water for irrigation are being subdivided into smaller lifestyle blocks. These smaller properties have no need for the retained large irrigation dams.

Financial incentives may be available for dam size reduction or dam removal in the Angas and Bremer catchments – for more information please contact the High Demand Project Officer on 8391 7526 or SAMDB.water@sa.gov.au

Removal of unrequired dams will ease some of the pressure on local surface water resources and will make additional water available for downstream users and the environment.



The disused Bugle Ranges stock dam prior to removal



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The Bugle Ranges site after the dam was removed

For more information

Natural Resources Office, Mount Barker

South Australian Murray-Darling Basin

Contact the High Demand Project Officer:

P (08) 8391 7526

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www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/high-demand-emlr



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